United Nations ST/SGB/2005/20

Secretariat

28 November 2005

Secretary-General's bulletin

Prevention of workplace harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority

The Secretary-General, for the purpose of strengthening accountability in the Secretariat and raising awareness among staff of their roles and responsibilities for creating and maintaining a workplace free of harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority, promulgates the following:

Section 1
Purpose

The purpose of the present bulletin is to announce the introduction of a system-wide, self-administered learning programme entitled "Prevention of workplace harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority".

Section 2
Learning programme

2.1 The learning programme has been developed jointly and in collaboration with the United Nations Development Group, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Office for Project Services and the World Food Programme. In addition to related policies and procedures already in place, it reflects the commitment and shared responsibility of all staff to defend the Charter of the United Nations by respecting cultural and religious differences and equal rights for women and men.

2.2 The learning programme is designed to raise awareness of the Organization's zero tolerance of harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority, to provide guidance on the Organization's policy and procedures on harassment and to foster the creation of a harmonious working environment, free from intimidation, hostility, offence and any form of discrimination or retaliation.

2.3 The learning programme will be available online, and the Office of Human Resources Management will shortly provide staff with details on how to access it. A version in CD-ROM format will also be available upon request to the Office of Human Resources Management through the local human resources office.

05-61945 (E) 301105

2.4 The learning programme will be available in all the official languages of the United Nations. It will be issued initially in English, French and Spanish in November 2005. In December 2005, it will be available in Arabic, Chinese and Russian.

Section 3
Implementation

3.1 All staff at all levels are required to complete the learning programme. Upon successful completion, a certificate of completion is issued, which should be retained by each staff member and a copy placed in his/her official status file. A copy should also be provided to the staff member's supervisor.

3.2 Heads of departments and offices are responsible for ensuring the completion of the learning programme by themselves, their staff and others for whom they are responsible.

3.3 Staff are reminded that the Organization is fully committed to ensuring that any allegation of harassment, sexual harassment and/or abuse of authority will continue to be taken seriously and will be fully investigated.

Section 4
Final provisions

The present bulletin shall enter into force on 1 December 2005.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**
Secretary-General